

USING PODCAST AS AUTHENTIC MATERIALS TO DEVELOP STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL

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Abstract

This paper aims at giving insight and ideas about the use of podcasts as authentic material to promote student's speaking skills. Podcast is a digital media that contains recorded programs from television, radio, and interviews. Since this media provides audio from English native speakers, it can help language learners to improve their speaking skills as a model. Many researchers believe that podcasts can be alternative media to improve the student's speaking skills. According to Chan et al. (2011), since the podcast is one of the alternatives, the teacher can fairly easy to provide authentic material in teaching. In this case, the teacher will be a facilitator to improve the student's speaking skills by implementing podcasts inside or outside classroom activity as the media.

Keywords: *podcast, speaking skill, classroom activity*

Introduction

The discussion of teaching student's speaking skill is commonly raised due to its problems in teaching learning process and this topic becomes an interest of some scholars to solve. Celce-Murcia (2001) reveals that some problems arise in teaching speaking skill such as large class, limiting both students opportunity to talk, and teacher opportunities to provide feedback. Meanwhile according to Meng, J (2010), the problems in teaching speaking are students are at different levels, the class is very big, and the big teacher's action zone. In English as Foreign Language context, the learners face some problems in improving speaking skill (Ur, 2000) such as inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation and mother tongue use. These problems need solutions due to the importance of speaking skill in present day.

Furthermore, speaking skill is one of English language skills that should be improved. It cannot be denied that speaking skill is really essential. This skill plays an important role in communication. The success of communication can be proven from the way people speak. Communication skill becomes an essential aspect in present day. People should develop their speaking skills since the communications skill is important as on of 21st century skills. Communication skill includes sharing thoughts, questions, idea and solutions. Besides, effective listening, delivering oral presentation, communication using digital media,

engaging in conversations and discussion, communicating in diverse environment are the way to improve communication skill.

One of strategies to develop student's speaking skill is utilizing podcast as a model. Podcast is assumed as an alternative strategy because it contains many topics spoken by English native speakers. There are many models provided in podcast such models as report, conversation, discussion, and interview. Since podcast contains authentic materials, it will help learner to know how native speaker speaks and they can learn from the real sources. Hence, podcast will help teacher in promoting students' speaking skill.

In order to develop student's speaking skill, the teacher can use podcast as a model. Therefore, this paper aims at elaborating the use of podcast as an authentic material to improve student's speaking skill. The implementation of podcast in teaching and learning process is presented as well.

Literature Review

The teaching of speaking skill

Basically, speaking is the oral practice in which someone employs a language and expresses their ideas, feeling, and thought in communication. It is one of the language skills that need to be acquired by the learners in order to they can communicate with others. Furthermore, speaking is an activity which has an important role in the process of language learning in the classroom. Through speaking, the students are able to subscribe their creative thinking in sharing ideas and thoughts. It is supported by Barnes (2003), talking is essential to sharing ideas and communicating in the classroom. Besides, speaking enables the students to persuade their mind, to inform something, and to ask questions based on their own point of view. Hence, as one of communicative skills, speaking is also taught in EFL classes as a part of curriculum.

In teaching and learning process, the teacher must consider several features of speaking. According to Duong (2014; in Samad, 2017), commonly thought of the most important aspects of speaking is grammar, fluency, accuracy, vocabulary and pronunciation.

First is vocabulary. Vocabulary is a word which has its meaning in every function. A word expresses the content of ideas to avoid confusion in communication. It plays a useful role to define any objects, actions, ideas as well. Mastering vocabulary would define someone's capability in understanding language.

Second is Grammar. This is similar to rigid rules in oral and written form. Grammar is a system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of words in the sentence. Moreover, Al-Mekhlafi and Nagaratnam (2011) adds that grammar is a set of rules that determines the structure of a language, and it could be the way to combine units of a language. Combining necessary units of language help a speaker or a writer in expanding any ideas in

their mind, and it makes a person a lot easier to build communication in expressing messages in spoken or written.

Third is Pronunciation. This is the process of pronouncing a particular word in a proper manner. Where pronunciation should be acceptable is a necessary aspect in speaking as well. Referring to Nation and Newton (2009), pronunciation is an individual sound which involves good articulation, and it has features of sound such as aspiration, voicing, voicessetting, intonation, and stress. Pronunciation plays a great role in speaking, and it gives a hint toward what is being said. The interlocutor will misunderstand on catching the meaning whether the speaker pronounces wrong pronunciation. Therefore, pronunciation is how to generate an acceptable and an unambiguous lexical word in language.

Fourth is fluency. It means knowing about how he/she expresses ideas without using filling word ("um" and "ah") while talking to the other occurs. Yingjie (2014) mentions that fluency is the capability to speak in effective speed and to speak smoothly and to produce the right word without thinking too much. In this case, excellent fluency will create better confidence in expressing ideas and it improves communication skill as well. To be classified as a fluent speaker, we might well fulfill this features as presented by Thornbury (2005) as follows, pauses may be long but not often, and pauses allow at the meaningful transition point.

Fifth is accuracy. According to Kusnierek (2015), accuracy refers to an understanding word, right in structures, syntax, and better in catching the meaning of messages of language without part of mistakes, and it generic structure of the speaking event that need to be followed sequentially or it is called genre (Samad and Adnan, 2017)

These five features must be taken into teacher's consideration in the teaching of speaking. The features should not only be possessed by the student but also by the teacher. These should be emphasized for students in order they will have a good speaking performance. To have these features, EFL students should be given an authentic material. They can learn from the material which is correct in English language. Therefore, these features must be taught in EFL class. Besides, teacher must also consider these features in teaching speaking skill. The teachers should provide the authentic material because the authentic material will help them in teaching learning process.

The problems in the teaching of efl speaking

The problems faced in the speaking class are not only confronted by the beginning students but also advanced students. Beginning students usually face difficulties in vocabulary and grammatical problem. The advanced student usually find difficulties in critical thinking, how to link their ideas and to produce appropriate target language discourse.

In EFL, especially Indonesia context, the students still make some mistake in basic grammatical error and vocabulary use in their English speaking even though they had been learning English at least six year or more. This shows that there must be something wrong in teaching and learning of speaking.

Responding to these problems, Burns and Joyce (1999) in Afriyasanty (2015) conducted a study identifying the three factors that cause students to be unwilling to practice their English. The first is cultural factor that relates to learners' belief or understanding toward the target language. For some cultures like Indonesian culture, it is still a little bit unusual for students to actively participate in class. Learners believe that the role of students in the class is to keep silent and listen to the teacher's explanation. They are bounded by the feelings of being reluctant to be active in class. They tend to keep their learning problems and confusion instead of asking for the teacher's assistance and more explanation. The second is linguistic factors. Linguistic factor refers to word choice, spelling and verb tenses. The third factor is social factor that refers to their ability to interact with others using English. In other words, they have minimum practice of using English.

Briefly claimed, all of the problems confronted by EFL students in speaking class are not only from the students, but also from the teacher. Hence, the teachers should be able to identify the fundamental problem in their speaking classes so that the solution can be found. One of the best solutions in assisting student's speaking problem is by giving alternative media in the improvement of speaking through podcast. Podcast is assumed as the alternative solution as it offers many advantages in teaching and learning activity.

After discussing the teaching of EFL speaking and problems usually occurred within the process of teaching, it is needed to discuss podcast before implementing the model to the teaching of speaking.

Podcast, its advantages and disadvantages

In this global era, being able to speak English becomes essential for people to communicate with global community (Samad and Fitriani, 2016). To help non native speakers to learn to speak this language, there are many kinds of technologies invented and one of those which provides material for language learning is called the podcast. The podcast, an uploading audio or video file to the internet, has emerged as sources in the academic field, and it provides many kinds of material in learning. The podcast is a recorded audio/video file uploaded to a website, so the website users can download freely and listen to it later time. Kavaliauskienė (2008) states that podcasts have given the language teacher numerous materials for teaching. Besides, Sloan (2005) adds, podcasting is an innovative way of broadcasting through the Internet and can be used for transferring digital audio content automatically to mobile phones. Gromik (2008) claims that podcasting can provide learners with "access to resources which are authentic, free and otherwise not available" in non-English

speaking contexts. Unlike other media, podcast is believed as alternative media containing authentic materials that can be used in learning process.

Furthermore, podcast provides many models of speaking performance e.g. interview, dialogue, conversation and report. Additionally, the growth of podcast for English Language Teaching(ELT), podcast has provided a various content as well which assist either teacher or student to improve speaking skill in teaching and learning process. Man-Man SZE (2007) in Barto (2008) shows the content types in podcast as follows:

1. Comprehensive. It refers to wide range of content types, such as traditional listening comprehension activities, interviews, and vocabulary.
2. Whole lessons. The podcast quoted above, for example, makes use of a news story in each episode. The text of the news story is provided, and is accompanied by the audio file. There is then a lesson plan accompanied with worksheet materials. In effect, these are ready-made lessons based on podcasts which teachers can use in the classroom directly.
3. Vocabulary, idioms, etc.. This is a popular type of podcast, probably because it is easy to produce. In this kind of podcast, the host chooses some vocabulary items and explains their usage.
4. Conversations with a script. These podcasts contain conversations between native speakers. To help less proficient learners, each episode is accompanied by the script, for learners to refer to while listening to the conversation.
5. Jokes. These are podcasts containing jokes. Because they usually play on language, they encourage careful listening by the learner.
6. Stories. These are usually story read aloud. They may or may not be followed by listening comprehension questions.
7. Poetry. These are podcast containing the great poems of the past. One can listen to the declamation and read the poem.

From these above content types, it will assist teachers to choose the appropriate model for teaching student's speaking skill. Content which is accompanied by the transcript and various exercise will be more helpful in learning process in EFL. Hence, teachers can provide the materials from podcast based on the goal of teaching speaking.

Furthermore, SZE (2006) states that a number researchers have revealed the positive fruitions that podcasting can assist language education. According to Chan et al. (2011), since the podcast is as one of the alternatives, the teacher can fairly easy to provide an authentic material in teaching. Podcast media affirmatively shows good point for students in case of it would bring the students closer to the target language, and it affects students' attitude and motivation.

In other studies, as pointed out by Mohammadzadeh (2010) that podcast materials can boost students' motivation and help them become more independent and confidence in speaking. By using podcast media, the teacher can support the students in building self-confidence and the learning situation enjoyable. This self-confidence may be raising due to their ability to understand the rhetoric of a particular topic as a result of listening repetition and oral performance (Samad, 2016). This understanding makes them find the learning process is enjoyable and attractive. This study assumes that the podcast media gives contribution for the students in improving their speaking performance.

Scholars have offered some reasons for including podcasts in language learning classrooms (Blaisdell, 2006; Chinnery, 2006; Clark & Walsh, 2004; Laing, Wootton & Irons, 2006, Manning, 2005; Meng, 2005, Sloan, 2005). They include:

1. Podcasting is possible anytime and anywhere. Students can save their time, money and energy by downloading and listening to the podcasts at their convenience.
2. Personalization is an option that podcasting can provide for learners to match their learning styles and strategies. McRae (2010) defines personalized learning as assessing and addressing individual learners' strengths based on their specific needs and learning styles.
3. Podcasting can provide pedagogic advantages when used as complementary to e-learning.
4. Probably one of the most important pedagogic characteristics presented by the podcasts is enabling learning through listening. Rosell-Aguilar (2013) argues that listening to the podcasts can facilitate learning by providing comprehensible input through meaningful and engaging activities.
5. Podcasting makes learning easier, faster and more attractive to the learners.

In English language teaching (ELT), independent podcasts are mostly used since they can be tailor-made to suit the needs of different learners. Moreover, one of the benefits of podcast is that it promotes learners' autonomy. In terms of speaking skills, podcast can also help students particularly those who have less confidence to speak in front of an audience because podcast can be produced performing behind the scenes (SZE, 2006). Thus, using podcast will be effective and efficient in improving student's speaking skill since it proves some benefits aforementioned.

Besides, a study conducted by Barto (2008) found that podcast has also disadvantages. The disadvantages are time consuming and cost. Even though podcast is assumed as alternative media to develop student's speaking skill, it also spends much time. The duration of audio can be more than 10 minutes which means that listening to the audio can take a half of learning duration in classroom. Additionally, the beginning students need more time to understand the content of the speaker due to their lack of vocabulary. Meanwhile, podcast is

also costly for some students. Not all students own mobile phone, especially in remote area. Thus, this is not appropriate to implement then.

In short, based on the above discussion, many advantages on the implementation of podcast in language learning process. Meanwhile, the challenges or disadvantages of podcast implementation can be anticipated by the teacher.

Steps to implement podcast in the classroom and out-side classroom

In implementing podcast as a model in classroom activity, not only the teacher but also the students must be well-prepared. Firstly, the teachers must understand their role. They become a facilitator in learning process. It means that they do not play many roles in the learning but they facilitate the learning. Thus, as facilitator, they should provide guidance in teaching speaking skill. This guidance can facilitate the students to know the step in improving speaking skill. The guidance is a form of structure and instruction to guide student's preparation. The teacher can have a series of questions to help the students understand the information within the audio. Besides, teacher must provide authentic materials to teach student's speaking skill from podcast media. As podcast provides many model that can be played, teacher can select the model based on the goal of teaching speaking skill, report, for example. The report topic can be about a health problem.

The next step is within the classroom. In pairs, the students will listen to audio about health problem with different title. During listening, they have to write down the information from the guidance provided by the teacher: What makes weight increased?, How to create a healthy meal?, etc. The learners must pay attention the features of speaking, e.g. vocabulary and pronunciation. These two features are the aspects that learners can learn from the podcast.

After listening to the audio, the student discuss with their friends in pair to answer the questions given. During discussion, the students must speak English. Then they exchange their ideas or opinions to discuss the topic. In this case, students are expected to be more active and critical thinking. From the discussion, one of them explains the result in front of their friends. They must speak accurately and fluently. It means that they must consider their grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. In this section, the teacher can assess the students' speaking based on the five features of speaking and their friends who listen to her/his presentation can judge what is wrong. Furthermore, if they misspell or mispronounce, teacher can re-play the audio in the end of presentation in order the students can know the correct one. In this case, repetition is needed.

Finally, in the post teaching section, a reflection and evaluation can be done. Evaluation and reflection in learning process are very important for the teacher to evaluate what have worked and what have not.

As an authentic material, podcast also can be implemented outside classroom. The teacher assign students to make a presentation from the topic in

podcast but he/she gives opportunity to student to select the topic what they are interested in. The students can choose the content which is accompanied by the transcripts provided in podcast. It is a quite different from the activity in the classroom. In outside classroom activity, the teacher should raise students as autonomous learner and independent learner. Besides, the teacher as a facilitator still monitors the process. In implementation, the students can play the audio until they gain the accuracy and fluency. To help them, they can read the transcript while listening to the audio. This will be effective to develop their speaking skill. In the assignment, the points that should be found in the audio are made by the teacher e.g. what is the topic about? What is problem in the topic? what is the solution?

After that, the students should explain the selected topic from the audio. In this section, students are practicing English speaking as English native speaker speak. They can convey the information from the podcast accurately and fluently. From the practice, it will develop the student's speaking performance. Thus, students can apply this method outside the classroom.

Gradually, the students will be more motivated and confident in practising English speaking without any anxiety. Practice makes perfect. Their pronunciation will also be better and their way to share ideas will be well-arranged.

Conclusion

Theoretical and research literatures on Podcast has shown a positive result in teaching of EFL speaking. Based on the discussion, the advantages found in the podcast implementation as a model fit to the needs in EFL speaking improvement. By applying podcast, teacher provide an authentic material in classroom to improve students' speaking performance. Besides, teacher can assign students outside classroom by implementing podcast as a model so that students are able to improve their speaking skill autonomously and independently.

Nevertheless, there is still limited literature and research finding on the implementation of podcast to improve student's speaking skill, either in classroom or outside classroom. Therefore, future studies within this area are recommended to be conducted. This study of podcast brings to the conclusion that using podcast is effective in solving problem in EFL speaking class.

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